

Message Text

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73

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ARA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 EB-07 TRSE-00 ERDA-07 COME-00 MC-02 IO-10

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R 181432Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9379

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

UNCLAS LONDON 04157

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, RH, VE, UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA; NEWSPAPER CLAIMS SMITH SHOPPING FOR
JETS IN VENEZUELA

1. LONDON'S SUNDAY TELEGRAPH, MARCH 16, HAS ARTICLE CLAIMING RHODESIA HAS BEGUN "AN UNDERCOVER OPERATION" TO BUILD UP ITS AIR FORCE WITH NEGOTIATIONS TO OBTAIN JET FIGHTERS FROM SOUTH AMERICA AND RECRUIT FORMER R.A.F. MEN IN BRITAIN TO FLY THEM. TELEGRAPH CLAIMS AGENTS FROM SALISBURY HAVE DISCUSSED WITH VENEZUELAN BUSINESSMEN AN OFFER TO BUY 28 AMERICAN SABRE JETS FOR 6.3 MILLION POUNDS. RHODESIA IS ALSO LOOKING FOR MORE PLANES IN OTHER SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES.

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2. DIPLOMATIC SOURCES IN CARACAS, TELEGRAPH CLAIMS, HAD

SAID ON MARCH 16 THAT RHODESIAN AGENTS HAD OFFERED 225 THOUSAND POUNDS EACH FOR THE SABRES, WHICH ARE NOW IN THE HANDS OF PRIVATE BUSINESS INTERESTS. THE RHODESIANS ALLEGEDLY SUGGESTED THAT PLANES MIGHT BE SHIPPED SECRETLY TO SOUTHERN AFRICA UNDER GUISE OF FARM IMPLEMENTS.

RICHARDSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT, MILITARY AIRCRAFT, MILITARY PERSONNEL, AIRCRAFT SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LONDON04157
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750094-0934
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750341/aaaabkoi.tel
Line Count: 68
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: hartledg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 JUN 2003 by SilvaL0>; APPROVED <20 FEB 2004 by hartledg>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RHODESIA; NEWSPAPER CLAIMS SMITH SHOPPING FOR JETS IN VENEZUELA
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, RH, VE, RAF
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006